



IN THE MOMENT: FACILITATOR GUIDE

Activity overview: There is no participant handout for this activity. The goal of this activity is for participants to practice using the scientific method when opportunities arise in the moment.

Directions: Prior to the training, prepare three posters, one for each of the three scenarios below. Below the scenario, list the steps of the scientific method: Generate questions, Observe, Predict, Experiment, and Discuss.

Divide participants into three groups and assign each group to a scenario. Ask each group to write examples of questions and statements for each of the steps of the scientific method.

Poster 1

Scenario #1:

A child enters the classroom after being outdoors and notices a burr stuck to her pant leg.

Help child generate questions.

Observe

Predict

Experiment

Discuss

Poster 2

Scenario #2:

A child rolls a tennis ball down the slide and says, "It went down!"

Help child generate questions.

Observe

Predict

Experiment

Discuss

Poster 3

Scenario #3:

You are cutting paper with children in the art area.

Help children generate questions.

Observe

Predict

Experiment

Discuss

Discussion: If desired, have participants share comments as a large group.

Note: The steps of the scientific method may not occur in the described order. It is not necessary for each step to take place every time. Observing and predicting often occur multiple times.

Example:

Poster 1

Scenario #1:

A child enters the classroom after being outdoors and notices a burr stuck to her pant leg.

Help child generate

questions. “Ohh. Look at that.” (If children do not generate questions, model by generating your own: “I wonder what is making that burr stick to your jeans?”)

Observe

“Maybe when we go outside this afternoon we can search and find another burr.”

Predict

“Which plant do you think will have burrs?”

Experiment

“Let’s try this one.”

Discuss

“Did it stick? Why do you think that? Let’s write that down.”

Poster 2

Scenario #2:

A child rolls a tennis ball down the slide and says, “It went down!”

Help child generate

questions. “That ball went down really fast!” (If children do not ask questions, model by asking your own: “What made the ball roll so fast?”)

Observe

“Roll it again and let’s see how fast the ball goes down the slide this time.”

Predict

“What do you think will happen if we roll this basketball down the slide?”

Experiment

“Let’s test it out.”

Discuss

“Why don’t you draw a picture of what happened?”

Poster 3

Scenario #3:

You are cutting paper with children in the art area.

Help children generate

questions. “Do the shapes stay the same when we cut them into smaller pieces? (If children do not ask questions, model by asking your own: “I wonder what will happen if I cut my paper this way?”)

Observe

“Wow! Look what happened when I cut the square in half.”

Predict

“What shape do you think the paper will be if I cut it in half? What if I cut it another way?”

Experiment

“Can you cut your paper in half? Cut it another way.”

Discuss

“Isn’t that cool? When we cut it the first way we got rectangles. When we cut it the second way we have two triangles!”